

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, CO

SUBJECT: POLITICAL SUMMARIES: THE WEEK IN COLOMBIA

1. SUMMARY. CONSERVATIVE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE BETANCUR CONCEDE TUCBAY VICTORY, BUT PROMISED TO REMAIN POLICITICALLY ACTIVE WHILE NOT PARTICIPATING IN A TURBAY GOVERNMENT. PRESIDENT LOPEZ EXPHASIZED TRADE, QUITA SUENO, AND THE COLOMBIAN-VENEZUELAN TERRITORIAL DISPUTE IN A POST-PANAMA PRESS CONFERENCE. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVE PRESIDENT AND MAJOR TURBAY SUPPORTER ALBERTO SANTOFIMIO RECEIVED A NEW LEASE ON HIS POLITICAL LIFE ALTHOUGH LEGAL CHARGES AGAINST HIM REMAIN. TWO UTC LEADERS WERE NAMED TO POSITIONS IN THE INTERNATIONAL LABOR ORGANIZATION. RELAXED GOVERNMENT REGULATIONS ON COFFEE EXPORTS MAY HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO LOWER PRICES. GUERRILLA ACTIVITY HEADED COLOMBIA'S INTERNAL SECURITY PROBLEMS. END SUMMARY.

2. BETANCUR CONCEDES TO TURBAY. CONSERVATIVE PRESIDENTIAL
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CANDIDATE BETANCUR CONCEDED DEFEAT IN AN EMOTIONAL BUT GOOD HUMORED STATEMENT AT A PRESS CONFERENCE ON JUNE 20 (BOGOTA 5865). HIS VICOTRIOUS RIVAL, JULIO CESAR TURBAY, WILL NOT BE IN COLOMBIA FOR THE ELECTORAL COURT'S OFFICIAL PROCLAMATION OF HIS AS PRESIDENT-ELECT BUT RATHER IS TRAVELLING TO EUROPE ON JUNE 25. HE WILL PROBABLY RETURN TO COLOMBIA IN MID OR LATE JULY. ACCORDING TO SOURCES CLOSE TO TURBAY, HE WILL NOT

HAVE MADE PRIOR TO HIS DEPARTURE ANY FIRM DECISIONS ON THE COMPOSITION OF HIS GOVERNMENT ALTHOUGH BOTH LIBERALSSAND CONSERVATIVES BELIEVE HIS CABINET WILL BE AN ALMOST EVEN MIX OF THE TWO MAJOR PARTIES.

3. LOPEZ COMMENTS ON PANAMA MEETING. DURING A POST-PANAMA PRESS CONFERENCE, PRESIDENT LOPEZ MAINTAINED THAT THE MEETING'S FINAL COMMUNIQUE DID NOT ACCURATELY REFLECT THE DISCUSSIONS HELD, INCLUDING HIS EMPHASIS TO PRESIDENT CARTER OF THE NEED TO SUSTAIN HIGH PRICES FOR COMMODITIES SUCH AS COFFEE AND SUGAR IN ORDER TO INSURE A PERMANENT RESOURCE FLOW TO DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. LOPEZ CALLED THE ICA COFFEE FLOOR PRICE OF 75 CENTS UNREALISTIC AND ADDED THAT TH US STILL DID NOT HAVE A COFFEE POLICY. HE COMMENTED THAT COLOMBIA MIGHT FIND AN AMPLE MARKET IN THE SOVIET UNION FOR SOME COLOMBIAN PRODUCTS WHICH AR FACED WITH US AND EUROPEAN PROTECTIONIST MEASURES. LOPEZ ALSO TOOK THE OPPORTUNITY TO PUBLICIZE A PROMISE FROM PRESIDENT CARTER TO SEEK RATIFICATION OF THE QUITA SUENO TREATY. THE COLOMBIAN LEADER EXPRESSED SURPRISE AT STATEMENTS BY HIS VENEZUELAN COUNTERPART IN WHICH THE LATTER HELD THAT THE LEADERSHIP OF BOTH NATIONS HAD LACKED COURAGE IN THEIR EFFORTS TO SETTLE THEIR MARITIME BOUNDARY DISPUTE. LOPEZ NOTED THAT THE GOC HAD PROPOSED A SOLUTION ON WHICH THE VENEZUELAN HAD YET TO COMMENT.

4. HOUSE PRESIDENT RELEASED FROM PRISON. THE YOUTHFUL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PRESIDENT OF THE HOUSE REPRESENTATIVES AND MAJOR SUPPORTER OF PRESIDENT-ELECT TURBAY, ALBERTO SANTOFIMIO, WAS RELEASED PROVISIONALLY FROM PRISON AFTER 5 1/2 MONTHS OF DETENTION (BOGOTA 1113). THE MALFEASANCE CASE AGAINST SANTOFIMIO, WHO EASILY WON ELECTION TO THE SENATE WHILE IN JAIL, CONTINUES HOWEVER, PENDING REVIEW BY A HIGHER COURT. COMMENT. SANTOFIMIO'S IMPRESSIVE SENATE VICTORY AND WARM RECEPTION ON BEING RELEASED INDICATE THAT HIS POLITICAL CAREER IS NOT YET OVER. AN ADVERSE FINDING BY THE HIGHER COURT, HOWEVER, COULD PUT AN END TO HIS PRESIDENTIAL ASPIRATIONS.

5. UTC LEADERS EARN ILO POSITIONS. THE PEESIDENT AND VICE-PRESIDENT OF COLOMBIA'S LARGEST DEMOCRATIC LABOR SYNDICATE, THE UNION OF COLOMBIAN WORKERS (UTC), WERE NAMED TO TWO POSITIONS IN THE INTERNATIONAL LABOR ORGANIZATION (ILO). TULIO CUEVAS REPLACES THE ASSASSINATED JOSE MERCADO AS THE LATIN AMERICAN REPRESENTATIVE ON THE ILO'S ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL. HIS UTC VICE-PRESIDENT, ALVARO RAMIREZ, WAS APPOINTED TO THE ILO'S INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF PROFESSIONAL AND TECHNICAL WORKERS.

6. GOC LOWERS COFFEE REINTEGRO. THE GOC AGAIN HAS REDUCED

THE COFFEE REINTEGRO - THE MINIMUM AMOUNT OF DOLLARS COFFEE EXPORTERS MUST EXCHANGE FOR PESOS AT THE CENTRAL BANK. THE GOVERNMENT MONETARY BOARD LOWERED THE PRICE FROM \$290 TO \$275 PER 70 KILO BAG. WHILE PRIVATE COFFEE EXPORTERS HAD ALREADY RETURNED TO THE MARKET WHEN THE PRICE WAS \$290, THE REDUCTION PROMISES TO MAKE MORE COFFEE AVAILABLE FOR SALE AND MAY HAVE BEEN A PARTIAL CAUSE FOR THE RECENT DROP IN PRICES IN NEW YORK TO AS LOW AS \$1.88 PER POUND.

7. GUERRILLA ACTIVITY LEADS INTERNAL SECURITY PROBLEMS. THE SELF-DESIGNATED GUADALUPE SALCEDO GUERRILLA GROUP ANNOUNCED IT S FOUNDING IN BUCARAMANGA IN MID-JUNE. THE NEW ORGANIZATION'S AUTHENTICITY AND A IMS ARE UNCERTAIN. THE PEDRO LEON ARBOLDEA GROUP, THE URBAN ARM OF THE PRO-LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PEKING EPL, IS SUSPECTED IN A BOGOTA BANK ROBBERY. THE SOVIET-LINE FARC CLAIMED CREDIT FOR THE BOMBING OF A GOVERNMENT BANK IN CAUCA WHICH ALLEGEDLY HAD REFUSED TO GRANT LOANS TO INDIANS IN THE REGION. STUDENT DISORDERS DIMINSHED SUFFICIENTLY TO RE-OPEN THE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY UNDER HEAVY SECURITY PRECAUTIONS, ALTHOUGH THERE WERE SOME STUDENT TROUBLES IN MEDELLIN. JOHNSTMN

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